# All Children Reading:
# A Grand Challenge for Development

## Quarterly Report: Round 2 Fund Management

**Rebecca Leege**

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## Executive Summary

The second quarter of FY16 encompassed significant preparation for ACR GCD's Annual Partners Meeting, including a report on our accomplishments to date, lessons learned and assets to carry forward to a new phase of ACR GCD as well as a Round 2 fund manager's report presentation. Accelerated research and design on Tracking and Tracing Books, EVOKE and the disability prizes also occurred this quarter. In addition, EduApp4Syria partners announced the five finalists on May 26, 2016, inviting them to Phase 1 of the prize competition. We also announced Dost as the winner of the UC Berkeley Big Ideas Mobiles for Reading competition. External engagement included attendance at the workshop "How Libraries Support National Literacy Efforts" hosted by UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, IREX and Beyond Access as well as hosting or presenting at four other events. In addition, a formalized engagement process with Pearson began, including their attendance at the Annual Partners Meeting. Notably, our listserv has nearly tripled in size from just over 1,000 when we began Round 2 to nearly 2,900 and our Twitter following has nearly reached 1,600.

## Activity Progress Update

As Fund Manager, World Vision (WV) is responsible for the coordination, support, and management of Round 2 funding. Please find below a progress update for each project activity.

## OBJECTIVE 1 - *COORDINATION OF ACR GCD ROUND TWO FUND MANAGEMENT:* SECOND ROUND OF THE ACR GCD GRANTS AND PRIZES ARE CARRIED OUT AND MANAGED EFFECTIVELY

In consultation with the ACR GCD, WV is expected to carry out the following activities as Fund Manager, based on decisions by the ACR GCD Steering Committee (ACR SC) and as feasible within funding constraints:

**Activity 1.1 Prize Implementation and Hosting:** This quarter demonstrated progress on further defining the requirements of the Tracking and Tracing Books field test in Malawi; a final draft narrative and skills matrix for EVOKE, a youth social innovator digital game on literacy; and country-specific research on disability. In addition, the Big Ideas competition and the EduApp4Syria prize competition winner and finalists, respectively, were announced.

**Prize #1: Enabling Writers** – URC released a writers' workshop RFP that requires applicants to note how they will utilize Bloom software to produce 200 leveled and decodable titles. Winners will be announced in Q4. In addition, Indiana University (IU) School of Education in partnership with the ACR GCD Partners, hosted *A Library for All* event at the IU campus to raise awareness of the global book crisis and the Bloom software as a tool for combating this challenge. More than 50 people attended, representing 15 countries. USAID is planning to replicate this model at other universities throughout the USA.

**Prize #2: Global Reading Materials Repository** – The Natoma Group produced a final report per their contract under URC. Next steps continue to be led by USAID.

**Prize #3: Big Ideas@Berkeley/Mobiles for Reading (2014-15)** – *No further updates are anticipated as this prize has closed.* Winner profiles can be found here.

**Prize #4: Tracking and Tracing Books** – While initial feedback post scoping trip noted a consolidation of JSI and CSF systems, both groups decided to pursue the prize competition independently.  Significant time was spent working with USAID Malawi in integrating the system into the book procurement RFP and alignment of field testing during the book distribution process for the upcoming academic year. The alpha field test is scheduled for October 2017.  In addition, the background research began for the beta field test planned for Asia in collaboration with DFAT.

**Prize #5: Digital Literacy to Strengthen Community Literacy Efforts** – *No updates.*

**Prize #6: Technology to Support Basic Education in Crisis and Conflict Setting** –Three of the four winners are implementing their project as detailed in Activity 1.3 and have submitted their mid-term reports. While great effort has been made to award the fourth grant, the applicant's design and time commitment has not allowed this initiative to move forward.

**Prize #7:  Big Ideas/**Mobiles for Reading  **(2015-16)** – Dost Education was announced as the winner of the Mobile for Reading on May 4, 2016. Through short, pre-recorded voice messages delivered via a call to feature mobile phones, Dost offers parents a low-cost and highly scalable approach to access the knowledge they crave and unleash their child's potential. Dost is unique because it delivers action-oriented content to functionally illiterate moms through the technology already in their hands.

**Prize #8: Children with Disabilities** – ACR GCD continues to explore a prize activity that will facilitate access to reading materials for children with disabilities. A meeting with UNICEF on May 6 allowed ACR GCD to consider collaboration on the global accessible textbook initiative. Disability research conducted by the team included global benchmarking of best practices for accessible content in Europe and a review of disability rights and resources in the Philippines.  A meeting with Colin Allen, President of the World Federation of the Deaf and Chair of the International Disability Alliance was held in June and he offered guidance on engaging with local organizations globally.

**Prize #9:  EVOKE** – ACR GCD, Arizona State University and The World Bank met to revise the work plan, which lead to drafting a revised skills matrix for literacy and accompanying activities aligned with the narrative.  Review of the platform is underway as well as preparations for a pilot test in Q1 of FY17, with anticipated roll-out in winter 2017.

**Prize #10:  EduApp4Syria** – Norad, ACR GCD and its partners announced five finalists on May 26, 2016.  These finalists were invited to Phase 1 of the competition, the development of an alpha version of the app. Phase 1 will conclude in Q4 bringing the finalists to three.  The beta version and final field testing will occur in November/December 2016.  ACR GCD has provided literacy and an Arabic linguist technical expertise and communication support for the competition.

**Activity 1.2 Grant Competition:**   Last quarter, the USAID Mission in India identified an additional $100,000 for project activities related to children with disabilities and identified Benetech as an ideal candidate. Benetech's supplementary proposal to develop an additional 500 accessible books in Indian languages to be placed on the Bookshare platform was approved and the final grant modification will be completed early next quarter.

Ongoing grant program management and capacity building activities are detailed in the following sections.

**Activity 1.3 Management of innovation and scale-up funding windows**: As many of the projects are in pilot stages, the two year grant cycle has not allowed sufficient time for full product development, field testing and implementation. Therefore, a few promising projects have submitted modifications for budget and time extensions. Little Thinking Minds and Kampuchean Action for Primary Education (KAPE) will be extending an additional semester and delaying full implementation to allow for field testing, respectively.

Ideation prize implementation is underway in Kenya (Xavier Project/Eneza Education), Ukraine (Outernet) and Sierra Leone (Voto/Mobile Ticha). The Xavier Project continues to be well-received in the refugee community at Dadaab and the team has registered 1,000 students and provided them with vouchers for the EnezaSMS study tool. The number of completed quizzes has doubled since the launch in March, with more than 50,000 taken in June. However, challenges to the program's efficacy have arisen since the government's announcement in May that Dadaab will be closed and refugees will be repatriated. This has refocused the attention of families, teachers and students, many of who are scheduled to sit for their class 8 national exams (final exams) in November. Many refugees are registering to repatriate or have already repatriated for fear that if they stay, the government will use force to send them home. Refugees are also selling their assets, such as generators, as they prepare for the repatriation, which will likely affect phone charging. The program is continuing as planned despite these challenges, but changes in performance rates are anticipated.

Outernet held their kick-off event with local librarians in February and has since installed Lighthouse technology, which is operating in five libraries. However, several challenges have arisen, most notably the resumption of Internet service in these local libraries. The availability of Internet service, communication challenges and the overall reduction in hostilities have led to uncertain levels of usage of the Outernet technology. Discussions are underway with the Outernet project team to determine how the technology could be repurposed or redirected to alternate locations and more adequately meet the need of refugees.

Voto/Mobile is finalizing their student recruitment process and curriculum development and will launch a six-week series of science-focused content in early fall. WV Sierra Leone has shared the current national curriculum with the project teams to ensure appropriate content development, with local voiceover talent. Community and school engagement efforts have been well received and 584 of 600 students have been recruited (64% girls, 36% boys) to date.

**Activity 1.4 Technical support and capacity development:** Significant technical and capacity-building support has been consistent throughout the life of all ACR GCD grant projects. Grantees are at very different stages of implementation. Due to start-up challenges and technology development delays, some grantees have yet to begin implementation and this quarter represented summer break before launching implementation at the start of next school year. For others, this quarter represented the final months of implementation. Therefore, technical support included regular discussions with grantees on everything from fidelity of implementation (FOI),

monitoring and evaluation, grant agreement adherence, budgeting, marketing/media opportunities and for some, end-of -project planning. School-to-School International (STS), continues to provide significant support to the ACR GCD grantees on project design, research sampling, assessment, and fidelity of implementation. The level of technical support and capacity development provided to many of the grantees is significant.

ACR GCD, USAID Morocco and IDRT continue to collaborate on the development of an approach to measure reading abilities in Modern Standard Arabic for children who are deaf/hard of hearing and use Moroccan Sign Language (MSL). An in-country technical design team has been identified to support the adaptation of reading assessment tools to enable MSL-translated administration and MSL responses from the students. The tool adaptation workshop, piloting and assessment is scheduled for October.

**Activity 1.5 Learning Agenda/Activity 1.6 Monitoring and Evaluation:**
STS continues to provide strong M&E technical support to grantees. This quarter focused on baseline data analysis, FoI capacity building and, for some, end-of-project planning. While drafts of baseline reports have been completed for all grantees (with the exception of ones planned for IDRT in October and Sesame Workshop who is redoing their baseline as a result of their sampling flaws during the initial collection) some are still going through the final review process. The reports for Benetech and Resources for the Blind were completed this quarter.

ACR GCD partnered with International Development Research Center (IDRC) and Fit-Ed on their call for proposals for research on Digital Learning for Development in Asia. Two of the three agreed upon activities have begun. First, a request for proposal for TRAC+ was put forward and the award to conduct research will be announced in Q4.  Second, an RFP to develop a digital gaming for literacy guidebook was announced with an award anticipated in Q4.  The third project is being revised as funding for PlanetRead's operation costs by the Ministry of Education has not come to fruition.

**Activity 1.7 Communications:**

The following communication activities were conducted this quarter:

**Marketing & Communication Collateral**
- ACR GCD Early Grade Reading Skills Spectrum
- April eNewsletter – Call for proposals, EGRA training & new resources
- May eNewsletter – Funding for digital gaming & mother tongue materials, webinars & more
- June eNewsletter – New funding, resources & webinars + EduApp4Syria finalists

**Media Placements/Mentions**
- **June 3, 2016:** #EduApp4Syria: Designing Apps to School Syria's War-affected Kids – *VOA*
- **May 17, 2016:** Seeking Solutions from the Unusual Suspects – *Huffington Post*
- **April 22, 2016:** Smartphone schools could help Syria's child refugees – *The Guardian*

Importantly, we were notified the end of May that the support ACR GCD has received from the Global Development Lab (via DAI) for PR support from Melwood Global would be discontinued, effective immediately due to the Lab's intent to use this contract to focus on their own projects. As such, ACR GCD has been without PR support for two months. Because we have greatly valued this support, we are soliciting proposals from Melwood Global, and other PR firms, in an effort to create a new contract, directly with ACR GCD, for PR support. We anticipate finalization of this in Q4.

**Announcement Placements**

This quarter, we were predominantly promoting the Enabling Writers RFP, Digital Guidebook Call and the TRAC+ research Call for Proposals. Announcement for these items were pitched to and picked up by the following (this list which excludes partner publications noted elsewhere in this report):

- Basic Education Coalition newsletter
- CIES Secretariat Weekly Announcements
- Global Reading Network newsletter

**Blog Posts on ACR GCD website**

- A Library for All: Indiana University School of Education Uses Open-Source Software to Develop Books for Everyone – authored by IU

**Twitter**

Established in February 2014, @ReadingGCD has attracted nearly 1,600 followers. WV also continues to create twitter content for usage by the Partners. We appreciate the creation of original social media content and retweeting conducted by our Partners.

Social media campaigns were also conducted to highlight the following events:

- International Children's Book Day
- National Library Week

**WV Internal Promotion**

- WVUS All Staff Meeting: Federal Way, WA – April 20, 2016 and Washington DC – June 8, 2016: All Children Reading hosted this weekly staff meeting, presenting on the issues of child literacy, the ACR GCD initiative; areas for cross-sector, intra-agency collaboration and scale; and the potential for partnership with the private sector and other funding mechanisms

- All Children Reading: A Grand Challenge for Development What benefits are you missing out on? webinar: June 28, 2016: This webinar was conducted for the World Vision International Education & Life Skills Community of Practice to share the numerous opportunities for WV National Offices to benefit from WV's engagement in ACR GCD such as the EdTech innovations being tested and researched, technologies available for adoption within WV programming, and partnership events and activities (with USAID, DFAT and other partners) they could participate in. ACR GCD innovations that other WV National Offices are adopting were also showcased.

**Activity 1.8 Events:**
All Children Reading hosted and/or attended the following events to showcase our activities and engage potential solvers and partners.

**Library for All Writers Workshop: Indiana University – April 2, 2016**
A writer's workshop, featuring Bloom software, was conducted to engage university students in the issue of the global book shortage.  The university provided a post for the ACR GCD blog, A Library for All: Indiana University School of Education Uses Open-Source Software to Develop Books for Everyone, reflecting on the workshop.

**TEDx Foggy Bottom 2016: Washington DC – April 23, 2016**
Christie Vilsack, USAID Senior Advisor for International Education, delivered a talk at the TEDxFoggyBottom highlighted child literacy challenges, the important role of a community in advancing child literacy, and Bloom software. While this presentation was given last quarter, the video was released on July 7.



**Global Partnership for Education webinar series:  Books for Every Child - the Global Book Fund – May 10, 2016**
During this webinar, Tony Bloom presented on ACR GCD innovations.

**Education and forced displacement – How can technology make a difference? webinar: May 18, 2016**
Hosted by INEE, this webinar featured the Landscape Reviews ACR GCD contributed to: *Education and forced displacement – How can technology make a difference?* and *Leveraging Technology for Education of Refugees and IDPs*

**ACR GCD Annual Partners Meeting: Washington, DC:  June 13-15, 2016**
Representatives from each partner agency joined a three-day event that showcased and celebrated the past five years of partnership, sharing their reflections on the experience and outcomes to date, and visioning for future partner engagement.  A report of the meeting will be made available to the Partners in August.

**Gates Grand Challenge meeting**
At the invitation of the Global Development Lab, we also submitted slides featuring grantees Little Thinking Minds, OLE Ghana and World Education, Inc. for the Lab's presentation at the Gates Grand Challenge meeting

**Activity 1.10 Website Management:**
The following updates/additions were made to the website:
* Landscape Reviews (conducted in partnership with GIZ, INEE, and Creative Associates International):
  * Leveraging Technology for Education of Refugees & IDPs (3 modules)
  * Education in Conflict & Crisis:  How Can Technology make a Difference?

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- ACR GCD Info Sheets
  - o <u>Disability Info Sheet</u>
  - o <u>Education in Emergencies Info Sheet</u>
  - o <u>Enabling Writers Info Sheet</u>
  - o <u>Tracking & Tracing Books Info Sheet</u>
  - o <u>ACR GCD Info Sheet</u>
- <u>Big Ideas competition winner profile</u>
- <u>EduApp4Syria finalist profiles</u>

**Activity 1.11 Catalyzing Global Action in support of solving the ACR GCD problem:** The ACR GCD partners meeting fostered reflection and discussion on the next steps to vision the future of ACR GCD, including partnership growth. The Partners recognize the tremendous platform ACR GCD represents to continue attracting innovative approaches to improving literacy in developing countries as well as the partnership mechanism it offers.

OBJECTIVE 2 - *ACR GCD PARTNER ENGAGEMENT*: ACR GCD FOUNDING PARTNERS ARE FULLY INFORMED, CONTRIBUTING TO, AND PARTICIPATING IN DECISIONS AND VARIOUS ACTIVITIES OF ROUND 2.

WV appreciate the support offered by USAID (including the Global Development Lab), World Vision Australia, the Australian Government and contractors DAI (including Melwood Global), and STS.

**Activity 2.1 ACR GCD Founding Partners coordination and consultations meetings**
Partner meetings are coordinated monthly by WV, with participation from USAID, the Australian Government and WVAus. WV also coordinates bi-weekly teleconferences, with communication colleagues at USAID E3, DAI, Melwood Global and the Global Development Lab, regarding events and communication activities. In addition, WV coordinated an in-person ACR GCD partner meeting on June 13-15, 2016 in Washington, D.C. During that time, DFAT offered to support an evaluation of ACR GCD which will help inform future activities.

**Activity 2.2 Facilitate decision-making throughout award process**
All ACR GCD Partners were involved in key decision-making that included EduApp4Syria, Big Ideas Mobiles for Reading, and disability prize competitions, design planning, events and strategic planning on new activities.

**Activity 2.3 WV will request and coordinate efforts to be conducted by the Founding Partners in support of Round 2**.
As mentioned above, WV is most appreciative of the support provided by the Partners, notably support in strategic planning, grantee monitoring, prize design, event planning and communications.

**Activity 2.4 Coordinate with USAID to support and integrate activities with USAID's other contractual mechanisms.**

As the Fund Manager for Round 2 and as a Cornerstone Partner, WV has strategically engaged with the Global Development Lab. ACR GCD is appreciative of the Lab's support to cover facilitation and prize support offered by Kristi Ragan, with DAI and other members of the Lab team respectively. WV also works with USAID contractor, URC, on the Enabling Writers roll-out as well as Tracking and Tracing Books. In also continues to proactively engage with NORC, where appropriate, in their support to Creative Associate's project in Zambia.

WV convenes bi-weekly teleconferences with the communication colleagues at USAID E3, DAI, and Melwood Global to coordinate and strategize events and communication activities and explore areas of collaboration with other E3 and Lab activities. In the previous quarter, it was noted that due to a change in staffing, no representative from the Global Development Lab has been available to join the calls this quarter. However, this has now been rectified and a representative is joining the calls.

WV appreciates the efforts of the partner agencies in promoting ACR GCD activities through their communication channels. This quarter ACR GCD activities were known to have been promoted within the following partner mediums:

- **USAID** – *HESN News You Can Use*, *Lab Insider Digest*, as well as @USAID, @USAIDEducation and @GlobalDevLab.
- **World Vision US** – Education and Life Skills CoP newsletter as well as @WorldVisionEdu and @WorldVisionUSA
- **World Vision Australia** - @WorldVisionAus

ACR GCD has promoted USAID (including Global Reading Network and URC) events, CoP initiatives, and reports via social media, our website, and eNewsletters.

**OBJECTIVE 3 - *PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT*: INCREASE PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT IN ACR GCD THROUGH FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN ORDER TO FOSTER INVESTMENT IN THE SCALING OF INNOVATIONS.**

Progress has been made in attracting new partners to ACR GCD activities. Building off last quarter's extensive outreach to the private sector, ACR GCD and Pearson have continued the partnership conversation leading to an articulation of potentially co-designed/sponsored activities.

**Activity 3.1: Conduct outreach to private partners**.

Discussions continued with Pearson, UNICEF, the World Bank and ASU. As noted above, ACR GCD continued discussions with Pearson related to writers workshops and engagement in EVOKE. In concert, ACR GCD furthered the roles and responsibilities around the development and launch of EVOKE with the World Bank and ASU. On disability, ACR GCD met with UNICEF in New York City to discuss activities that it might support to further advance the UNICEF led universal design tablet project. Conversations continued during the quarter leading to anticipated agreed upon activity(ies) in Q4.

**Activity 3.2:  Increase private sector contributions.**
None applicable in Q3.

**Activity 3.3: Link grantees with promising innovations to potential donors/stakeholders for scale up.**
None applicable in Q3.

## Personnel

None applicable in Q3.

## Budget:

An SF 425 accompanies this report.

A budget revision will be completed in Q4 with the anticipated contribution by DFAT to support ACR GCD activities in Asia and potential new funding from Pearson.

## Next Quarter Plans:

Please find below highlights of key activities that will occur in Q4 2016:
- Conduct end line and end-of-project field visit to Catholic Relief Services in Lesotho.
- Develop strategy and timeline of Children with Disabilities prize
- Announce three finalists of EduApp4Syria competition moving to Beta version of product
- Complete grantee acceleration review reports
- Finalization of all grant project baseline assessments including IDRT and Sesame Workshop.  (IDRT's is pending)
- Conducting training in Malawi for Tracking and Tracing Books alpha field testing
- Confirm Pearson collaboration on key activities
- Develop and finalize plan for next phase of ACR GCD
- Develop grantee end-of-project timeline plan inclusive of exploring cost, timing and research implications
- Award TRAC+ and Digital Gaming for Literacy guidebook research awards
- Present at USAID's International Literacy Day event
- Submit proposals for presentation at mEducation Alliance Symposium
- Secure contract for new firm to support ACR GCD's media relations activities

## Conclusion

Q3 reflected a significant investment of time to prepare for the ACR GCD Annual Partners Meeting.  Several in-depth documents were written for the meeting to reflect the work to date as well as framing for future efforts. Consensus was reached by ACR GCD Partners that no new activities will be launched outside those agreed upon under Round 2, to allow sufficient time and reflection to develop a robust and well-thought out strategy for future investment.  ACR GCD Partners appreciate DFAT's leadership in supporting research and personnel to help launch this process.

Prize development and roll-out also encompassed a significant portion of time mainly related to the field testing plans for Tracking and Tracing Books, stakeholder consultations on disability, and the literacy framework for EVOKE.

WV continues providing capacity building and technical support to improve the research design and implementation of grant projects. This close coordination is providing significant learning opportunities, based on both challenges and successes, of using technology to support literacy.